

## DOSTOEVSKY AS A MENTOR OF SUFFERING TO REALITY IN HIS SELECTED NOVELS

NEENA .K. FRANCIS

*Assistant Professor, Department of English, Bharathiar University Arts and Science College,  
Gudalur, Nilgiri, Tamil Nadu, India*

### ABSTRACT

*Suffering is somewhat mysterious we may know some of the theological reason for suffering from scripture. The concept of suffering differs according to each religion but the universal truth of suffering is always the same. All religion teaches suffering as a concept of God's plan to his people to refine them from their evil deed or to test their faith in His Divinity and its necessary that all creation under the sky have to undergo suffering to face their destiny and no one can escape from this reality but they can sustain this suffering by turning themselves towards God.*

*This theme of subtle repetition of an unsettlingly dark nature of suffering to refinement are found in Dostoevsky's novels, in each novel he has executed his wish of teaching his readers regarding his experience of being suffered and his way to redemption through knowing the love of Almighty and he made this successful through his characters in his novels.*

*Dostoevsky's universe is filled with the presence of God, he attain this vision by observation of science and physical world, he stress more on the point that his sense of God was not formed by reading The Bible but because of his close examine of suffering that he faced in his life and this suffering made him to read New testament, which lead him to realize the Mysticism of God, later on he become conscious that God Almighty will help each individual to endure sufferings, "A man should be dissolved in prayer, ! One cannot exist in prison without God; it is impossible than out of prison" (TBK 664).*

**KEYWORDS:** *Unsettlingly, Almighty, Conscious*

**Received:** Oct 05, 2016; **Accepted:** Dec 01, 2016; **Published:** Dec 08, 2016; **Paper Id.:** IJELDEC2016015

### I Want to Suffer and by Suffering I shall be Purified

### INTRODUCTION

Suffering is somewhat mysterious we may know some of the theological reasons for suffering from scripture. The concept of suffering difference according to each religion but the universal truth of suffering is always the same.

According to Hinduism, suffering is an inescapable and integral part of life, it is a result of past thoughts and actions either in his or a pervious life, by enduring suffering, it is a like "pay for" so as to cancel the past negative actions, and a positive concept which lead to progress on a spirituality.

Islam teaches suffering as a reward given to man by God. Those people who have committed sin get reward as sufferings in the form of remission of the punishment in the life. In the latter view, suffering tests belief; a true Muslim will remain faithful through the trials of life. God uses suffering to look within humans and test

their characters, and correct the sinners.

In the concept of Christianity, suffering is designed by God; it is also something to make us think. It is a tool God uses to get our attention and accomplish his purpose in our lives in a way that would never occur without the trials or irritation. And it's clear that all religion comes out with a conclusion that suffering is a place where human beings are put to test their faith to recover themselves from their sinful deeds or to make themselves strong to face the world in a positive mind set.

### **Parable of Butterfly**

This reminds me about a parable which I read and it's about a transformation of caterpillar to butterfly and I wish to state this truth of suffering with this parable of butterfly. A man spends hours watching a butterfly struggling to emerge from its cocoon. It somehow managed to make a small hole but its body was too large to get through it, after a long struggle, it appeared to be exhausted and remained absolutely still. The man who was watching all these minor activities of this caterpillar decided to help it and with a pair of scissors he cut open the cocoon, thus releasing the caterpillar in form of butterfly, however the caterpillar's body was very small and wrinkled and its wings were uneven to from a butterfly. The man continued to watch, hoping that, at any moment, the butterfly would open its wings and fly away. Nothing happened in fact, the butterfly spend the rest of its brief life dragging around its shrunken body and shriveled wings, incapable to flight.

What the man out of kindness and his eagerness to help had failed to understand was that the tight cocoon and the efforts that the caterpillar had to make in order to squeeze out of that tiny hole where's Nature way of training the caterpillar to reform its shape into butterfly to fly with its beautiful colors of wings. Sometimes a little extra efforts are precisely what prepare us for the next obstacle to be faced. Anyone who refuses to make that effort, or get wrong sort of help is left unprepared to fight the next battle and never manages to fly off to their destiny. It's clear that all living being have to undergo suffering for attaining their destiny or to reach refinement.

### **Dostoevsky as a Writer of Suffering**

One can find easily that subtle repetition of an unsettlingly dark nature of suffering to refinement is founded in Dostoevsky's novels. In each novel he has executed the theme of horrific suffering through different characters.

Dostoevsky believes that everything we know comes from experience, and he emphasize that there is difference between understanding and feeling, these both were of two distinct kinds of knowledge, the difference is like the variation between reading the word fire and actually being burned. He reveals the truth of his finding from experiencing secular world and religious world that one can survive in this world only with the help of divine power, which need a religion.

Dostoevsky's vision of a universe is filled with the presence of God, he attains this vision by observation of science and physical world, and he also points out that his sense of God was not only formed by his reading of his bible but also his close examination of suffering he has faced in his life which made him to read 'New Testaments' and to get close to God Almighty, he realizes the fact that only God almighty can help him to endure sufferings, so he wanted to bring out this fact of realization in his novels. 'A man should be dissolved in prayer'! One cannot exist in prison without God; it is impossible than out of prison' (The Brothers Karamazov 664) Dostoevsky points out that one cannot endure the pain of suffering without help and presence of Divine power.

Dostoevsky throughout his novels he preaches the truth of life. In *Crime and Punishment* he sketches the character of Raskolnikov in a way to teach readers that one might commit sin consciously and cause suffering to others but still they can get refined from their crime only through the agony and self realization, by confessing their sin to God, and submitting themselves in the hands of His Divine grace. Here in this novel *Crime and Punishment* Dostoevsky concerns himself not with the actual impact of the murder but with the way the murder forces Raskolnikov to deal with tormenting guilt and wants of confessing his crime to Sonia, and he force Sonia to read to him the biblical story of Lazarus, The account of Jesus' raising Lazarus from the dead and it's an symbol of salvation and shares two important beliefs, former one is that there is nothing impossible with God and later one is that God resurrect deadly things to life here Raskolnikov feels guilty of his sin and wanted to resurrect himself from his deadly sin as Jesus resurrect Lazarus from death and Dostoevsky indeed, by focusing so little on Raskolnikov's imprisonment, and focuses more on the inner world or inner self of Raskolnikov, he suffered with doubts, deliria, second guessing, fear and despair through which he reach salvation towards the end of the Epilogue we can see the self realization of Raskolnikov break through the wall of deadly sin attain himself to lead a happy life with Sonya.

Yes; and what were now all these torments of the past! All even his sin, and sentence, and exile- appeared to him, in the first transports, He could not, that evening bring his thought to bear long upon anything; he only felt! Life – full, real, earnest life, was coming, and had driven away his cogitations. Under his pillow lay the New Testament. He took it up mechanically. The book belongs to Sonia; it was that same from which she had read to him of the raising of Lazarus Seven years –only seven years! At the commencement of their happiness they were ready to look upon these seven years as seven days. They did not know that a new life is not given for nothing; that it has paid dearly for, and only acquired by much patience and suffering and great future efforts. (CAP 401-402)

Dostoevsky novel world is filled with external inflicted suffering that the best strategy to cope is to adopt Myshkin's water- off- a duck's back approach to just universally forgive everyone for everything instead of being constantly offended by those who wish to harm. For instance the character of Burdovsky, who claims to be the son of Pavlishchev comes with a group of young men and demands that Myshkin should give up some of his inheritance to Burdovsky but Myshkin knows well that Burdovsky is trying to cheat him still Myshkin receives him and never try to fight with him or have a hatred towards him rather Myshkin goes to an extent with a pleading cause to apologies him for not having offered the money in a correct way. "It's my fault, said Myshkin, going up to Burdovsky. I've done you a wrong. I was to blame" (TI 272). Dostoevsky just wanted to reflect a philosophical concept to his reader that even one can stop bothering about the worldly worries, if they have a heart to empathies with others suffering and heart to love others as they love themselves and his effort of portraying this idle man, a "positively beautiful individual" is made successful through Prince Myshkin, who represents all the qualities of best human being desires, as Christ who was crucified for his selfless love towards his people, he loses his life of being normal and goes back to delirium all because of his selfless love towards others, in the end of the novel we can find Myshkin at the state of disability. *Myshkin was sitting beside him motionless on the floor, and every time the delirious man broke into screaming or babble (TD549)*

Even Dostoevsky wavered in his beliefs and he claims that he had reached faith through a furnace of doubt and he depict this quality through Dmitri from *The Brothers Karamazov*, he reflect the real insight of Dostoevsky himself, here in this novel Dmitri is sinful and never believes on the existence of Almighty, he was a man who even had a hatred to kill his own father Fyodor, due to his lust towards a women called Gurshenka and had a desire to murder his father and it is

revealed in his letter which he wrote to Katya “*I shall kill him as soon as Ivan has gone away TBK 775*, moreover this letter of revenge paved strong evidence for his father’s murder, We can find that still in the midst of suffering he fails to believe in God and never turn back to the Divine mercy of God, but Dmitri as an innermost human being also yearns for the renewal or reformation, *He thirsted for that reformation and renewal TBK 408*, still he fails to turn back to God with prayer, rather he indulge more with sinful life, which made him to suffer more and more “*He walked like one possessed, beating himself on the breast*” (TBK 434). Dmitri knows that God always watching him so he does not want to kill his father and when Dmitri comes to know that Gurshenka loves him and just as Dmitri and Gurushenka are about to consummate their love, the police arrested him for other’s guilt, only during his suffering in prison he realize the value of life and he turns back to Lord with prayer and faith, he says that “*Suffering makes a man into angel or create a hero!. Oh, yes, we shall be in chains and there will be no freedom, but then, in our great sorrow, we shall wise again to joy*” (TBK 664).

## CONCLUSIONS

All these characters suffers not because of their vulnerability but because of their insensibility towards Gods divine grace, Dostoevsky advises that man look to Christ as a model for self transfiguration, but not ready to take themselves in such a state of self transfiguration through suffering and he even goes to an extent to show how a character should be by citing some characteristic features of human quality through character like father Zossima, Alyosha from The Brother Karamazov, Liza from The Crime and Punishment, Myshkin from The Idiot. And all the positive character in his novel is ready to accept suffering because these characters knows that through suffering they can get refrained from their wrong doing.

## ABBREVIATIONS

The Brothers Karamazov – TBK

Crime and Punishment – CAP

The Idiot - TI

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